

CHAPTER

9

SECTION 1

CORE WORKSHEET A

The Nature of Interest Groups

3

Functions of Interest Groups in the American Political System

Your text identifies six main functions of interest groups. The chart below gives examples of interest groups performing these functions. Identify the function or functions each example illustrates. On a separate sheet of paper, answer the questions that follow.

Interest Group Activity	Function
a. The National Rifle Association publishes an article in its magazine about an upcoming congressional vote on a gun control bill.	
b. The AFL-CIO includes a petition on its Web site, demanding support for quality, affordable health care.	
c. The Economic Policy Institute and the Heritage Foundation publish economic papers offering opposite conclusions regarding whether the minimum wage should be increased.	
d. OMB Watch “was formed in 1983 to lift the veil of secrecy shrouding the White House Office of Management and Budget.”	
e. The American Automobile Association provides its members with information on the safety, reliability, and fuel economy of new cars.	
f. The American Iron and Steel Institute publishes monthly data regarding steel imports to the United States, which Congress uses to adjust import policy.	
g. Both the American Conservative Union and the Americans for Democratic Action rate members of Congress as “liberal,” “moderate,” or “conservative” based on Congressional votes.	

1. What are three criticisms of interest groups, according to your reading?
2. Based on the examples in this worksheet, which interest groups would you like to learn more about? Why?
3. How do interest groups contribute to the democratic process? Use specific examples of interest groups and their functions to explain your answer.